THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : (a) LTC suspension order has been revoked *w.e.f.* 2nd March, 2003 to the Central Government employees. The State Government employees are governed by the rules and regulations framed by the respective State Governments and therefore, it is for those Governments to take appropriate decision in the matter.

(b) LTC facility for Central Government employees has been restored *w.e.f.* the current block year *i.e.* 2002—2005 for any place in India and 2002-2003 for home town.

(c) No, Sir.

Medium of entrance examinations in defence services

†3501. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI : Will the Minister of PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS be pleased to State :

(a) whether English paper is compulsory in NDA, CDS and other entrance examinations of defence services;

(b) whether Hindi paper is also compulsory or is optional in the said examination;

(c) whether good knowledge of English is essential for higher officers of defence services;

(d) whether knowledge of Hindi is also desirable; and

(e) if so, action taken/proposed to be taken by Government so far examination of Hindi in entrance examination of defence services for judging knowledge of Hindi ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : (a) and (b) Union Public Service Commission conducts two examinations *viz.* the National Defence

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Academy and Naval Acadamy Examination (NDA & NA) and the Combined Defence Services Examination (CDS) for admission to various Defence Academies. The syllabi for these examinations contain English as a subject paper. The question papers for both the examinations are of objectives type (multiple choice).

(c) Good knowledge of English is preferable for higher officers of defence services.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The issue of introduction of Hindi as a medium of NDA & NA and CDS examinations is at present under the consideration of the Government.

Power to ERCs

3502. SHRI ABANI ROY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to State :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the media report captioned 'Power lack teeth, study';

(b) if so, whether the Electricity Regulatory Commissions in the country are not given adequate powers to deal with various problems;

(c) if so, the facts thereof and whether Government purpose to give more powers to ERCs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Electricity Regulatory Commissions (ERC) Act, 1998 provides for powers and functions of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) as well as State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs). Functions of CERC are stipulated in section 13 of the ERC Act. As regards SERCs, States have been given flexibility in regard to setting up of Regulatory Commissions as also in terms of conferring certain functions on them. Sub-section (1) of section 22 of the Act stipulates mandatory functions of SERCs while Sub-section (2) of section 22 provides for optional functions which may be conferred upon the